DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 290 913 CE 049 603

AUTHOR Jones, Paul E.; Wall, Robert E.
TITLE Evaluation of Public and Private Training Programs in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area.
PUB DATE 17 Oct 87
NOTE 18p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Evaluation Association (Boston, MA, October 14-17, 1987).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Budgeting; Comparative Analysis; *Employment Programs; Instructional Materials; *Job Training; *Private Agencies; Program Content; *Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; *Public Agencies; *Training Methods
IDENTIFIERS *Maryland (Baltimore)

ABSTRACT

A study compared private and public training programs in the Baltimore (Maryland) metropolitan area. Survey instruments were sent to 105 individuals who had been identified as either directing or coordinating a job training program in the Baltimore area. Seventy-six usable survey instruments were returned (a 72 percent response rate). There was considerable agreement among private and public training organizations as to the importance of the skills listed in the first part of the questionnaire. Generic or people-oriented skills were valued most highly by all respondents, with specific job skills receiving a much lower ranking. The private programs did tend to place more value on knowledg of the company's field, working at remote locations, and meeting the pressure of deadlines. The public and private programs were all developed in much the same way (individuals were given projects to develop). Both types of organizations preferred on-the-job and competency-based approaches; however, private programs placed more emphasis on self-instructional materials than did their public counterparts. One area where considerable differences were found was that of communications applications of training materials. Private organizations were more likely to use materials for employee news and information, management communications (to employees), annual meetings, and sales functions, whereas public organizations were more likely to use materials for community relations. Thus, public organizations were more likely to use materials for training, whereas private organizations were more likely to use materials for communications purposes. A greater percentage of private organizations had separate training budgets (69.2 versus 58.3 percent), whereas training budgets were more often subsumed under another line item among public organizations. (MN)

Evaluation of Public and Private Training Programs in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area

Paul E. Jones

and

Robert E. Wall

Department of General Education

Towson State University

Baltimore Maryland

Paper Presented to the Annual Meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Boston, Massachusetts. October 17, 1987.

Presentation of this paper was supported,
in part, by the Faculty Development
Committee, Towson State University.

ABSTRACT

The study's purpose was to evaluate differences in private and public training programs in the Baltimore metropolitan area. The specific questions investigated specific program characteristics that would provide insight into respective program characteristics. The questions of the study were:

1. Do private and public training programs value different skills in their employees?
2. Is training typically carried out differently between public and private programs?
3. Do the two types differ in the applications of training programs they produce?
4. Are there differences in the physical facilities of training programs in public and private organizations?
5. Are there differences in the size of training programs in public versus private organization?

Questionnaires were designed with items that provide data for each of the questions of the study. A cover letter and follow-up procedures were used to obtain a response rate of 72 percent. The survey instrument underwent informal field testing and was revised according to information gathered.

The population of this study consisted of the largest public and private organizations in the Baltimore area. Since no single source lists all training programs, several directories and agencies were consulted in order to identify training departments and programs. Sources consulted included: a listing of the 500 largest employers in the region, a current directory of the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), and a directory of the Maryland Instructional Television Association (MITVA). From those sources, we identified 105 individuals who served as directors or coordinators of individual training programs. Seventy-six useable questionnaires were returned (72 percent).

Data from the questionnaires were entered into a VAX-11/70 computer, and the SPSS-X statistical package was used for analysis. Factor analysis of variables by institution type (public or private) was performed. Cross tabulation of responses provided percentiles for each item and response category was performed.

In respect to the first question, twenty-four employee skills were ranked in importance by private and public training programs and revealed many similarities in the valuing of those skills. Certain differences, however, were noted. Ranking of the skills and differences was discussed.

The next section attempted to compare characteristics of the training programs. Similarities in how training programs were developed were revealed. Most frequently, both private and public departments gave projects to individuals for development.

The third question compared the applications of the training programs. Here, a number of differences emerged. Public organizations used their programs for community relations most frequently, while private programs most often produced programs for employees' news and information.

The fourth question addressed differences in the physical facilities of the two types of training programs. A high percentage of both groups (74 percent) reported that their facilities were either "state of the art" or "improving."

In regard to the size of the training programs, private programs more often reported their size to be large or middle-sized, while public organizations reported their facilities to be small.

INTRODUCTION

Training in government, business, medicine, and the non-profit areas is a highly diverse and changing area. Organizational size, mission, history, and current market conditions, all have profound shaping influences on the characteristics of training entities. Training operations vary in their methods, size and services, and instructional approach. While they share an overall instructional function with public schools, colleges, universities and the like, trainers tend to see themselves as quite distinct from the field of education. Presumably, training departments do a considerable amount of on-the-job training, individualized training, use training consultants and take a behaviorally oriented approach or a competency-based approach to instruction.

The study's purpose was to evaluate differences in private and public training programs in the Baltimore metropolitan area. The specific questions investigated specific program characteristics that would provide insight into respective program characteristics. The questions of the study were:

1. Do private and public training programs value different skills in their employees?
2. Is training typically carried out differently between public and private programs?
3. Do the two types differ in the applications of training programs they produce?
4. Are there differences in the physical facilities of training programs in public and private organizations?
5. Are there differences in the size of training programs in public versus private organization?

METHODOLOGY

There was no single source which listed training departments in the Baltimore area. In order to identify those organizations which had a unified training department, several sources were consulted. First, a listing of the 500 largest employers in the Baltimore area was examined. From that listing, those businesses which would be most likely to have a unified training program were selected. Next, a national directory of the American Society for Training and Development was examined in order to identify individuals who were employed as training directors. Next, a directory of members of the Maryland ITVA (Instructional Television Association) was consulted. This directory listed individuals, their position as well as the organizational data. From these sources, 105 individuals who served as directors or coordinators of individual training programs were identified. Finally, each organization or individual was telephoned to verify their position and to determine whether or not they would be willing to participate in the study. In some cases, information was corrected or updated in the telephone conversation.

INSTRUMENT

The purposes of the survey instrument were:

1. to determine which training skills were considered to be most important to the organizations;
2. to determine how training was typically carried out in each department;
3. to determine what applications were made of various media produced by the training departments;
4. to determine the general condition of the existing training facilities;

5. to determine the size of the training departments and the organizational structure of the training department.

In order to obtain data relevant to those items, a survey instrument was developed. The instrument underwent informal field testing and was revised according to information gathered.

PROCEDURE

On February 24, 1986, a package of materials was sent to each of the participants. This packet included a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey and directions for completing the questionnaire, the survey instrument, and return postage. Follow-up letters were sent to non-respondents on March 17, 1986 and again on April 7, 1986. Telephone follow-up calls were made between April 17 and May 10. Seventy-six useable questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 72 percent.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data from the questionnaires was entered into a VAX-11/70 computer, and the SPSSX statistical package was utilized for analysis. Respondents were divided into two categories: private and public training organizations. Cross tabulation of responses providing percentiles for each item and response category was performed. The second method of analysis was principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation. The factor analysis was used to determine if there were factors which would explain, in part, the patterns of responses received.

RESULTS

The first question of the study was whether or not organizations differed in respect to the training skills they valued in their employees. Twenty-nine skills were rated from "most important" to "of little

importance" (using a 5 point scale) by directors of both types of training programs.

TABLE 1

Rating of Skills by Private, Public and Combined

Rank		Private		Public		Combined	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Working under Pressure of Deadlines	50	95.1	24	100.0	74	97.4
2	Working in a Team	50	96.2	22	91.7	72	94.8
2	Working with Minimal Supervision	49	93.2	23	95.8	72	94.8
3	Problem Solving Skills	47	90.4	24	100.0	71	93.5
4	Interpersonal Communications	47	90.4	24	100.0	71	92.4
5	Knowledge of Company's Field	44	84.6	16	66.7	60	79.0
6	Writing Reports	37	71.2	19	79.1	56	73.7
7	Supervision of Small Staff	28	67.3	21	87.5	49	73.6
8	Conducting Workshops and Training Sessions	37	61.2	14	58.4	51	67.1
9	Editing	31	59.6	19	79.2	50	65.8
10	Instructional Design Skills	29	55.8	15	62.5	44	57.9
10	Development of Complex Training Programs	30	57.7	13	54.2	43	56.6
11	Scriptwriting	24	46.2	17	70.8	41	54.0
12	Testing and Evaluation Skills	25	48.0	16	66.7	41	53.9
13	Graphics Production	30	57.7	10	41.7	40	52.6
14	Media Post-Production	24	46.2	15	61.5	39	51.3
14	Producing Slide/Tape Presentations	26	50.0	13	54.2	39	51.3
15	Writing Self-Study Workbooks or Manuals	29	55.8	9	37.5	38	50.0
16	Working at Remote Sites (Travel)	30	57.7	7	29.2	37	48.7
16	Multi-Media Production Skills	23	44.2	14	58.3	37	48.7
18	Computer Programming	28	54.8	8	33.3	37	47.4
19	Television Production	22	42.4	13	44.2	35	46.1
20	Writing Procedural Manuals and Job Aides	29	46.4	9	45.8	38	46.0
21	Media Pre-production	18	34.6	15	61.5	33	43.4
22	Media Storage, Ordering and Inventory	18	34.6	14	58.4	32	42.1
23	Still Photography	19	36.5	8	33.4	27	35.5
24	Designing Computer-Based Instruction	16	31.8	7	29.2	23	30.3

Pearson's r = .76 $p = < .001$

Table 1 shows the public, private and combined rankings of skills by respondents. There was considerable agreement among private and public training organizations as to the importance of skills listed. Generic or "people" oriented skills were valued most highly by all respondents. Teamwork, working under pressure of deadlines, working in a team, working with minimal supervision were among those interpersonal skills valued most highly by both groups. Also, at the top of the list are the ability to communicate, to write reports, and problem solving skills. The ability to work effectively with others was most highly valued by both groups. Both groups ranked specific skills in media production lower than the more generic skills.

While there was considerable agreement regarding the importance of those skills, certain differences did exist. Private training programs valued knowledge of the company's field, working at remote sites and meeting the pressure of deadlines more highly than did the public training programs. In addition, two production skills, graphics production and computer programming, were more highly valued by private training organizations. Specific skills in budget development, in designing training programs and delivering those programs were valued by both types of training organizations, while specific media production skills in graphics, scriptwriting, and post-production skills were frequently selected as important. It should be noted that while some skills were ranked lower, all of the skills listed were reported as important, and very few skills which were not listed on the questionnaire were added by the respondents.

The next question of the study was whether or not training was

typically carried out differently between private and public organizations. First, we looked at how the training programs are developed, listing five possible approaches: "teams work together," "individuals are given projects to develop." "use a consultant," and "training specialists are sent to develop programs for requestors."

TABLE 2

How Training Programs are Usually Developed

	Private		Public	
Method	N	%	N	%
Individuals Develop	30	57.7	17	70.8
Teams Develop	24	46.2	13	54.2
Consultant Develops	6	11.5	4	16.7
Specialist Sent to Requestor	17	32.7	3	12.5

Of these approaches, the most frequent practice by both types of organizations was that individuals were given projects to develop. Both organizations frequently used teams to develop training programs and the use of consultants was relatively infrequent by both types. No significant differences in how training programs were developed were noted.

The next item was concerned with the typical approach used in the development of training programs. Six typical approches and one catchall approach ("were eclectic") were listed.

TABLE 3

Rank		Private		Public		Combined	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	On-the-Job Training	27	51.9	10	41.7	37	48.7
2	Competency-Based Approach	17	31.7	9	37.5	26	34.2
3	Self-Instructional Materials	21	40.4	3	12.5	24	31.6
3	Eclectic	16	30.8	8	33.3	24	36.6
4	Employ Experts	13	25.0	8	33.3	21	27.6
5	Use Consulting Firm	10	19.2	6	25.0	16	21.1

On-the-job training was ranked first by both private and public organizations, and the use of a competency-based approach was listed as very commonly used by both types. One difference noted was the relatively low use of self-instructional materials by public organizations (12.5 percent) as compared with their use by private organizations (40.4 percent). Both types made frequent use of outside experts and consultants.

Are there differences in the organizations in the uses or applications of the training programs which they produce? In this survey, two categories of application, training and communications were used. Seven types of training were listed.

TABLE 4

Rank		Private		Public		Combined	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Basic Skills Training	33	63.4	16	66.6	49	64.4
2	Management Development	31	59.6	8	33.4	39	51.3
3	Job Training	28	53.9	9	37.5	37	48.6
4	Employee Benefits	31	57.7	6	25.0	37	47.3
5	Safety	21	40.4	9	39.5	30	39.4
6	Proficiency Upgrading	19	36.6	8	37.5	27	36.8
7	Sales Training	22	42.3	-----		22	29.0

Results showed considerable agreement between the two groups regarding the applications of the training materials produced. Basic skills applications were higher than all others for both groups while sales training was not used by public organizations. This reflects a real difference in the functions of these organizations since selling is a relatively rare function among public organizations. Among private organizations, sales training ranked fourth in importance.

Eight items comprised the category of communications applications of training materials produced.

TABLE 5

Communications Applications of Training Materials Produced

Rank	Application	Private		Public		Combined	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Employee News and Information	25	58.0	7	29.2	32	42.1
2	Management Communications	26	50.0	4	16.7	30	39.5
3	Community Relations	17	32.6	10	41.6	27	35.5
4	Annual Meetings	22	42.3	4	16.7	26	34.2
5	Sales Promotion	19	36.5	1	4.2	20	26.3
6	Sales Meetings	18	34.6	1	4.2	19	25.0
7	Security Analysis	10	19.3	2	8.6	12	16.0
8	Press Conference	7	13.4	5	20.8	12	15.7

There were a number of differences reported among these applications. Private organizations were more likely to use materials for employee news and information, management communications (to employees) annual meetings and sales functions. Public organizations were more likely to use materials for community relations. Overall, it appeared that public organizations were more likely to use materials for training, while private organizations were more likely to use materials for communications purposes.

The fourth question of the study gathered data relevant to the physical facilities of the two types of training organizations. Categories were: "state of the art," "improving," "old, but working," "phasing out" and "other."

TABLE 6

Current Status of Training and Production Facilities

	State of Art		Improving		Old		Phasing Out		Other		Row Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Private	11	21.1	25	48.1	7	13.5	1	1.9	8	15.4	52	68.4
Public	6	25.0	14	58.3	2	8.3		---	2	8.3	24	31.6
Column Total	17	22.3	39	51.3	9	11.8	1	1.3	10	13.2	76	100.0

Responses to this item was very similar for both types, with 74 percent reporting that their facilities were either "state-of-the-art" or "improving." In all, only 1.3 percent reported that their facilities were being phased out.

Respondents were asked to provide an indication of the size of their training program as compared with other training organizations. This was a relative estimate, but we were interested in the training director's perceptions of their own program size. Directors were asked to indicate if the current size of their training program was "large," "middle sized" or "small."

TABLE 7

Current Size of Training Program

	Large		Middle Sized		Small	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Private	8	15.4	21	40.4	23	44.2
Public	4	16.7	6	25.0	14	58.3
Column Total	12	15.8	27	25.5	37	48.7

Results indicated no differences in the perceived size of the training programs based upon whether they were in the public or private category.

The next item asked whether the training program appeared as a line item in their organization's budget, or if it was subsumed under another unit such as personnel or public relations, or if it appeared in some "other" form.

TABLE 8

Budget Item

	Line Item		Subsumed		Other		Row Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Private	36	69.2	10	19.2	6	11.5	52	68.4
Public	14	58.3	7	29.2	3	12.5	24	31.6
Column Total	50	65.8	17	22.4	9	11.8	76	100.0

Responses indicate there was a greater percent of separate training budgets among the private organizations (69.2 percent), and that the training budget was more often subsumed under another line item (29.2 percent) among the public organizations.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Based upon the analysis of data we received, we attempted to draw conclusions relevant to the major questions addressed by the study. First, we wanted to find out which skills would be rated most important by trainers. Rank ordering of these items revealed that more generic communications and "people" skills were most important to both trainers in private and public organizations. These included interpersonal communications, working with minimal supervision, working under pressure of deadlines and working in a team. Knowledge of the field or business

was ranked very high (79.0 percent) as were skills involving writing and editing. Media production skills were ranked important or very important by only about half of the respondents. This was true of slide/tape productions (51.3 percent), multi-media production (48.7 percent), graphics production (52.6 percent), television production (46.1 percent) and still photography (35.5 percent). Computer programming (47.4 percent) and designing computer-based instruction (30.3 percent) were ranked surprisingly low, given the current popularity and attention which is accorded this "new" technology.

Training programs are usually developed by individuals who are assigned the projects (61.8 percent). It is also common for trainers to be sent into the field to develop programs for requestors (46.8 percent). Teams working together on projects were reported as typical by 48.7 percent. Use of consultants was mentioned much less, with only 13.2 percent reporting that as current practice. On-the-job training and using a competency-based approach were mentioned most frequently as the ways that training is typically carried out.

Media produced for training was used most frequently to develop basic skills, management development and for job training. There were considerable differences between public and private organizations in terms of training applications. For example, sales training was mentioned by 42.3 percent of trainers in private organizations, but not mentioned at all by the public organizations. Employee benefits was ranked fourth by private organizations (57.7 percent) but was ranked sixth (25.0 percent) by public organizations. Communications applications which were ranked highest were: employee news and information,

management communications and community relations. As one would expect, the annual meeting was ranked higher by private organizations (42.3 percent) than public organizations (16.7 percent).

While ratings of facilities were certainly subjective and relative, it is surprising to note that almost one-fourth of all respondents considered their facilities to be state-of-the-art, while only a very small percentage (1.3) reported they were being "phased out." Overall, only 11.8 percent reported that their facilities were old, but working. These respondents appeared to have overall positive judgments concerning the facilities they use.

Again, the size of the training programs is a relative question. We asked respondents to report on their size compared to other training programs with which they were familiar. The public ortanizations were more frequently judged to be "small" (58.3 percent) compared to private organizations (small = 44.2 percent). A relatively small number considered their facilities to be large (15.8 percent) with public and private organizations reporting large facilities in about the same frequency.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chaddock, Paul H. "Training Trainers in Making Media Decisions," Business Screen, Vol. 33, No. 6, November/December 1972, pp. 56-57.

Crook, Ronald L., "A-V Media Graduates - What Now?; the industrial media specialist," Audiovisual Instruction, Vol. 19, No. 9, November 1974, pp. 29-39.

Macaluso, Michael D., "The Media Professional in Industrial Training and Development," Training and Development Journal, Vol. 27, No. 4, April 1973, pp. 22-24.

Hill, Fred Ernest, An Investigation of Media Operations in Business and Industry. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Indiana University, August 1977. 137 pages.

Semisch, Cinda and John Splaine, "The Training and Development Function in Industry: A Case Study," Media Management Journal, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 5-11. Winter 1986.

Gagné, Robert M., "What Should a Performance Improvements Professional Know and Do?" Performance and Instruction, Vol. 24, No. 7, pp. 6-7, September 1985.